

Jillianne Lyon

Regarding LD 1502- An Act to Update the Requirements for Health Insurance Coverage of Prostate Cancer Screening

Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee

April 25, 2025

My name is Jillianne Lyon, and I am a resident of Westbrook, ME, and a volunteer with FORCE (Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered). I am writing in support of LD 1502, which would provide coverage of guideline-recommended prostate cancer screening with no cost-sharing, eliminating this financial barrier for those at high risk for the disease.

FORCE is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering the millions of individuals and families facing hereditary cancers. Its community includes people with BRCA, ATM, PALB2, CHEK2, PTEN, or other inherited gene mutations and those diagnosed with Lynch syndrome. I have been a Patient Advocate Leader volunteer with FORCE since August 2024, where I help advocate for the unique needs of the genetic cancer community.

The American Cancer Society estimates that 313,780 people will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2025, with incidence rates increasing by 3% each year.¹ Despite this, federal law does not require health insurance policies to provide coverage for prostate cancer screening. Although screening is typically “covered” by many insurance policies, deductibles, co-pays, and other out-of-pocket expenses may deter or prevent high-risk and underserved populations from seeking care and detecting early-stage disease. Early detection saves lives. The 5-year survival rate for localized prostate cancer, caught before it spreads to other parts of the body, is nearly 100%.²

In 2022, I lost my grandfather to prostate cancer. I, and much of my family, carry a BRCA2 mutation that places many of my loved ones at a high risk of the disease. My male family members with the mutation have a 60% lifetime risk of prostate cancer, versus a 12% risk for the average male. Even the smallest amount of cost-sharing is a barrier to access screening. I urge the Committee to support LD 1502, a bill that could save lives and support access to necessary cancer screening. Other states have passed legislation to eliminate cost-sharing for Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) testing, including New York, Maryland, and Rhode Island. I urge Maine to do the same. Thank you for your time.

Jillianne Lyon

Patient Advocate Leader, FORCE

Westbrook, ME

¹ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/prostate-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>

² <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/prostate-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/survival-rates.html>

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